

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Circumscribing rectangles of respective characters in a document image are obtained. In a first pair as a pair of a first circumscribing rectangle in a first line (a line of A1 to A7) serving as a reference line, and a second circumscribing rectangle in a second line (a line of B1 to B4 or C1 to C7) as one of lines other than the reference line, and a second pair as a pair of a third circumscribing rectangle in the first line, and a fourth circumscribing rectangle in the second line, of these circumscribing rectangles, at least one of the circumscribing rectangles included in these pairs is controlled to vary the distance between the circumscribing rectangles of the first pair, and the distance between the circumscribing rectangles of the second pair in accordance with digital watermark information to be embedded, thereby embedding the digital watermark information.